

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 594

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR GR TU

SUBJECT: GREEK CONCERN OVER TURKISH STATEMENTS ON THE AEGEAN

REF: ANKARA 541

1. MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL TZOUNIS CALLED IN THE DCM ON JANUARY 22 TO EXPRESS THE GOG'S CONCERN OVER RECENT STATEMENTS BY TURKISH OFFICIALS REGARDING THE AEGEAN. TZOUNIS SAID THE GREEK EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO MAKE A PARALLEL APPROACH TO THE DEPARTMENT.

2. TZOUNIS REFERRED SPECIFICALLY TO THE REMARKS BY TURKISH DEFMIN SANCAR TO "YANKI" MAGAZINE, READING FROM A GREEK EMBASSY ANKARA TELEGRAM DATED JANUARY 20. IN ADDITION TO SANCAR'S STATEMENT (REFTEL) THAT THE BALANCE OF POWER IN THE AEGEAN WAS IN TURKEY'S FAVOR, THE GREEK EMBASSY'S REPORT QUOTED THE TURKISH DEFENSE MINISTER AS SAYING THAT TURKS WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY LIVED ON AEGEAN ISLANDS WERE NOW LOOKING BACK ON THEM WITH THE EXPECTATION OF RETURNING IN THIS CHANGED SITUATION. TAKEN TOGETHER WITH FONIIN ESENBEL'S STATEMENT ABOUT THE RIGHTS OF A "GROWING TURKEY"

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TZOUNIS SAID THE GOG TOOK SANCAR'S STATEMENT "VERY

SERIOUSLY".

3. TZOUNIS SAID HE WAS CALLING SANCAR'S REPORTED STATEMENTS TO OUR ATTENTION TO FALG WHAT HE TERMED TURKEY'S INCREASINGLY "AGGRESSIVE" ATTITUDE AND BECAUSE THESE AND OTHER DECLARATION BY TURKISH OFFICIALS INDICATED THAT THERE COULD BE NO STABILITY IN THE AEGEAN UNTIL A BALANCE OF FORCES WAS RESTORED BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY IN THIS AREA. REGRETTABLY, HE SAID, U.S. MILITARY AID TO TURKEY HAD HAD THE EFFECT OF INCREASING THE IMBALANCE AND THEREBY ENCOURAGING TURKISH MILITANCY.

4. DCM SAID THAT WE DID NOT AGREE WITH AND COULD NOT ACCEPT THE SUGGESTION THAT U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY CONSTITUTED A THREAT TO GREECE. OUR ASSISTANCE TO BOTH COUNTRIES WAS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF NATO AND HAD IN FACT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ONLY REAL DETENTE ENJOYED BY GREECE AND TURKEY, NOTABLY IN THE 1960-1962 PERIOD. TZOUNIS REPLIED THAT DURING THE PERIOD OF THE JUNTA THE USG LIMITED ASSISTANCE TO GREECE AND IT WAS DURING THIS TIME THAT A REAL IMBALANCE WAS CREATED. DCM OBSERVED THAT THE USG WAS USUALLY CHARGED WITH MAINTAINING THE JUNTA IN POWER. THE SIMPLE FACT WAS THAT OUR ASSISTNCE POLICIES WERE DESIGNED TO REENFORCE A CONCEPT OF MUTUAL SECURITY FROM WHICH BOTH GREECE AND TURKEY PROFITED. DCM COULD NOT INTERPRET STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO SANCAR, BUT HE NOTED THAT TOUGH DECLARATIONS HAD RECENTLY BEEN MADE BY BOTH GREEKS AND TURKS. HE SAID THAT GREEK CONCERN WOULD OF COURSE BE REPORTED TO WASHINGTON. MEANWHILE GOG COULD BE ASSURED THAT WE WISHED TO SEE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF GREEK-TURKISH DIFFERENCES IN THE AEGEAN AND ELSEWHERE AND WOULD DO WHAT WE COULD TO ENCOURAGE THE PROCESSES OF ACCOMMODATION.

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